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THE BOOK OF THE MONTH

A DEFENSE OF DANIEL¹

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This is the first of three volumes planned by Professor Wilson upon the Book of Daniel. The second volume will discuss the linguistic problems of the book, and the third will devote itself to the relations of Daniel to the canon as bearing upon the time of its origin. This present volume may confidently be classed as the most thoroughgoing and competent defense of the orthodox claims for Daniel that has yet been made. It takes its place at once alongside of the late Professor William Henry Green's *Hebrew Feasts* as representative of the best that traditional scholarship can do. The courage and diligence of the author are worthy of the highest praise. He has not feared to attack the strongest positions and he has spared no labor in assembling his munitions. And yet the foe has not been dislodged. It is doubtful whether anybody who really appreciates the force of the arguments urged by the historical school will be convinced by this book. It falls short of attaining cogency. Nor can the volumes that are to follow change the situation. To fail at the point attacked in this volume is to fail finally.

The discussion regarding the date and authorship of Daniel necessarily moves in the sphere of probabilities to a greater extent than in that of actual certainties. The strength of the argument of the historical school lies in its cumulative character. Professor Wilson endeavors to prove in case after case that the traditional inter-

pretation of Daniel has not been shown to be impossible. Suppose possibility be granted, it still remains to be asked whether it is probable. Here the answer will be again and again in the negative. Thus we are confronted with the further question, viz., Is it likely that in a fairly numerous series of cases in which a given interpretation is possible but not probable the truth will turn out to be on the side of the improbable? The law of chances is clearly against it. The citation of a list of improbable possibilities does not produce an impression of assurance or certainty.

Professor Wilson gives an excellent demonstration of the weakness of the argument from silence in chapter i, but it still remains true that Darius the Mede is nowhere else mentioned, that Belshazzar is never called king outside of Daniel, that no other document records a campaign of Nebuchadrezzar against Jerusalem in his third year, that there is no other record of Nebuchadrezzar's madness, etc. It is the multiplication of cases that weighs so heavily against the historicity of the narrative as a whole. When still other evidence is ranged alongside of the argument from silence, the chances in its favor multiply indefinitely. For example, Daniel must have lived to be eighty-five or one hundred years old according to the representation of the book, as Professor Wilson admits. The grouping of Daniel with Noah and Job in Ezek. 14:14, 20; 28:3, as a famous saint, which is almost convincing proof that Daniel in the days

¹ *Studies in the Book of Daniel. A Discussion of the Historical Questions.* By Robert Dick Wilson. New York: Putnam, 1917. Pp. xvi+402. \$3.50.

of the Exile had been long dead and canonized, has to be taken as implying that Daniel was Ezekiel's contemporary. We are asked to believe (p. 272) that Daniel was inspired sufficiently to predict the course of history, but not sufficiently to predict it clearly and accurately. Darius the Mede is made identical with Gobryas, the general of Cyrus, though we have no proof that Gobryas was a Mede or was ever called Darius. Is it likely that Cyrus had so masterful a person as Darius the Mede under him ruling over nearly all the empire, if only a weakling could ever have dreamed of such a transfer of power (pp. 197, 269 f.; cf. p. 263)? The method of the argument whereby Professor Wilson seeks to overthrow the charge that Darius the Mede is a reflection of Darius Hystaspis is illegitimate. In the first place, to say that Darius Hy-

staspis furnishes the foundation for Darius the Mede does not require that the story of the latter should conform in detail to the history of the former. Further, such exact conformity is not to be expected on the critical hypothesis. It would imply precisely the kind of historical information on the part of the writer of Daniel which the whole book shows he did not possess.

Professor Wilson's book should be welcomed by scholars of every school. It is a serious endeavor to deal with facts and to settle an important issue on its merits. Even the historical critic will be grateful for such a well-planned and executed attempt to overthrow his position, for it makes it quite evident that he has nothing to fear from the best scholarship that can be trained upon him.

BOOK NOTICES

The God of the New Age. By Eugene W. Lyman. Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1918. Pp. 47. \$0.60.

The Great War is compelling men to ask searching questions concerning religious faith. How to think of God in relation to this great historical upheaval is a peculiarly pressing need. Professor Lyman in this little volume indicates certain aspects of theological thinking which are receiving emphasis. The ideas of creative personality, dauntless saviorhood, social purposes, and universal good-will must be foremost in the religious belief of the new age. Professor Lyman persuasively shows how this conception of God will inspire and guide the aggressive type of creative religious activity needed to rebuild the shattered social relations of men. The somewhat complacent assurance of a faith which vaguely trusts in the reality of an immanent God must give way to the idea of an active creative co-operation between men and God. This type of theology is certainly sorely needed today. Professor Lyman's booklet is only a brief, suggestive sketch. His theme deserves further elaboration.

Matthew's Sayings of Jesus. By George D. Castor. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1918. Pp. ix+250. \$1.25.

As every student of the New Testament knows, the writers of Matthew and Luke used in addition to the Gospel of Mark other collections of Gospel tradition current in their day but now no longer extant. From minute scrutiny of our present Gospels Professor Castor reconstructs the earliest of these original sources and finds it to have been a collection of Jesus' sayings composed by the apostle Matthew.

This volume will appeal to all readers interested in the first three Gospels as historical sources of information about Jesus. The first part of the book will be of most value to specialists, but the reconstructed document printed at the end will be of interest to everyone who is seeking to recover the earliest version of the teaching of Jesus.

Professor Castor's method is thoroughly scientific and painstaking. While he adopts the generally accepted two-document theory of Gospel origins, he differs from most advocates of this hypothesis in believing that on the whole